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ABSTRACT

Four aspects of the problem of retention of students in foreign language programs are discussed. (1) "Retention and Dropout: The National Situation," by K. E. Muller, describes a survey of retention rates in a sample of colleges and universities; (2) "Retention and Dropout: Some Remarks on One Department's Experience," by F. Valette, reflects on the experience at Northern Illinois University where the dropout rate has remained at an acceptable level, and focuses on the question of language requirements; (3) "Retention and TAMBSPI at Ohio State," by G. Irvin and L. Twarog, describes and analyzes retention and dropout in six foreign languages at Ohio State, with a special focus on their individualized instruction program; and (4) "Effects of the Dartmouth Intensive Language Model," by O. Johnston, discusses the intensive German program at the University of Florida and analyzes reasons for student retention in it. (AMH)

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RETENTION AND DROPOUT IN BEGINNING COLLEGE LANGUAGE COURSES

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English Language Institute, University of Southern Mississippi

Hattiesburg, MS 1982

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FOREWORD

I had the pleasure of recording, transcribing, and helping edit the following presentations and discussions, which took place November 27, 1981, at the Annual Meeting of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in Denver.

Neither ACTFL nor the English Language Institute is responsible for the data, commentary, or conclusions to be found in this collection. The contributors and editors offer it in the hope that the information contained in it will be of practical and theoretical assistance in addressing the problem of attrition in beginning foreign language classes.

Katheryn S. Vasselus, English Language Institute
University of Southern Mississippi

INTRODUCTION: SOME DIMENSIONS OF THE PROBLEM

My name is Roger Johnson, and I work at the University of Southern Mississippi. To begin this session I shall introduce everyone briefly, but since people come and go, we shall have short, informal introductions at the beginning of the papers.

With us today we have Professor Lee Hildman, who is my colleague at the University of Southern Mississippi. He is a psychologist and has published in the British Journal of Psychology and in many other journals. Otto Johnston is professor and chairman of Germanic and Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Florida. You are perhaps familiar with his recent article in Foreign Language Annals about the intensive language model and his department's use of it in the German program at the University of Florida. Kurt Müller is the assistant director for foreign language programs for the Modern Language Association. He is well known to us for his contributions and editing accomplishments in the ADFL Bulletin, particularly in the field of second language acquisition. He is managing the MLA survey of foreign language enrollment, and in a moment we shall begin our session with a presentation of some of his findings on that project.

Leon Twarog, professor and chairman of Slavic and East European Languages and Literatures at Ohio State University, was scheduled to be with us, but he unfortunately is not here. In his place we are glad to have Professor Twarog's colleague, Professor Gerald Irvin, who is language coordinator at Ohio State and teaches Russian. He will present Professor Twarog's paper and add his own comments during the discussion period. The topic is retention and dropout in the mastery-based,

self-paced foreign language introduction at Ohio State University. You will have read about this program recently in the Modern Language Journal.

Francis Valette is associate professor and chairman of Foreign Languages and Literatures at Northern Illinois University. He is an organizer and leader in the field of international studies and has played an active role in improving foreign language instruction particularly in the Midwest. He will give us a chairman's perspective on the problem of retention. Kathryn Vasselus instructs English as a second language at the English Language Institute, Hattiesburg, Mississippi. She has agreed to transcribe what we have to say and will doubtless eliminate our non-sequiturs.

The majority of our presenters are chairpeople, and even I have put in the seven biblical years cultivating that cornfield. There is a reason for this composition. Chairpeople must provide the interface between teachers, the people who profess and promulgate knowledge, and hard-pressed deans, who seem compelled to deal with numerical models of the process we teachers think we are carrying out. Chairpeople, more than anyone else in the university, are acutely aware of the three R's of language teaching: requirements, recruitment, and retention.

We shall be discussing retention as a part of institutional language learning. Dealing with parts is always problematic. I recall John Muir's idea about nature: Whenever we try to separate and extract a piece of nature, we discover that the piece is connected to all the rest. Retention is connected to the totality of instructional language learning and teaching. I have come to think of it as connected most intimately with institutional requirements, but I am not sure how correct this perception is. Moreover, there are written and unwritten requirements and pressures that are not identical with the obligatory general curriculum

of a given institution: social, advisory, motivational, programatic, and pragmatic.

While retention is only a part of the constellation of activities connected with institutional language learning, it is, itself, a vague and unwieldy concept for systematic research. Studies of retention by our fine scholars and leaders, like Robert Gardner, Thomas Scovel, John Oller, Anthony Papalia, and Earl Stevick, have focused on the components of retention: success, motivation, aptitude, teaching methodology, student anxiety, intelligence, and background. (At least, I am assuming that these topics affect and are affected by retention and dropout.)

Our task is complicated by imprecise or missing definitions of such terms as retention, attrition, longevity, dropout, quitting, progress, and stopout. We have trouble distinguishing statistically between students who withdraw from classes before some arbitrary "drop date;" those who leave class because they have withdrawn from the institution; those who quit attending and studying but remain on the class roll; those who decide to stop language learning between semesters, and some of whom return after the interruption of one or more semesters; and those who stop studying a language because they have reached their goal. Some universities do not produce class rosters until the end of the first week of classes, by which time a fourth of the students attending the first day of French 101 may have disappeared without a trace. We speak of attrition from first year to second year and apply the term dropout to this problem only if two years' language study is required. We would like to be able to distinguish individual teachers whose "attrition rates" are low, but we have difficulties dealing with students who change sections or who simply fail and cannot continue language study. The problems notwithstanding, we need to make a start and to develop both our research methodology and our terminology.

Let me remark as another introductory digression that we in this room have reason to be humble. If we language teachers as a group had succeeded in retaining students until they had mastered a second language, then the typical American would not be tongue-tied. Too frequently, I think, we define retention or success for ourselves in terms delimited by our respective schools' curricula and expectations. Some institutions expect two years of study, or a certain level of mastery on a general examination. Some define the successful language student as one who has completed a year's work with passing grades. But the plain truth is that we Americans are tongue-tied. We teachers have not retained even the students initially attracted or forced into foreign language study long enough that language mastery has had an effect on American society.

In this discussion today we shall probably not address the problem of language mastery or success. We are shooting somewhat lower. We want to keep them there in the learning situation whether they are motivated or not, coerced or not. We want them for two years at least, so that our efforts will have some long-term effect; but for some students, we need to know how to keep them even through the first month of instruction. We think that what we do in the classroom is beneficial, humane, and necessary; but not everyone thinks so.

Kurt Müller will tell us where we stand in terms of retention and dropout in the nation.

Kurt E. Müller

RETENTION AND DROPOUT:
THE NATIONAL SITUATION

You are familiar, I am sure, with the many studies that the MLA has done of language enrollments over the years. My colleague Richard Brod has conducted the studies since the 1970 enrollment survey. When we wrote the last grant proposal, I came up with a few supplemental questions we thought would be profitable to ask. These questions, which concern the distribution of enrollments in language departments, form the basis of this report.

We took as a data base the Institutions of Higher Education that are listed by The National Center for Education Statistics, and we asked the National Center, or NCES, for a computer printout of institutions categorized by geographic location, by the highest degree offered by that institution, by size of student enrollment, and by type of control, that is, public or private.

We then chose a sample. We randomly picked every fiftieth institution on the list and the two following, so that we had the first, second, and third, then the fiftieth, fifty-first, fifty-second, and so on. We went right down the list in this manner and set up a number of cells. We thought that if we got responses from these various cells, we would have data from just about every type of institution, because we would have accounted for geographic location and the variable of size. Size had been a crucial element for such studies as the success of language programs in community colleges. Responses came from over 79% of the cells; so, while we may be basing our conclusions on a small

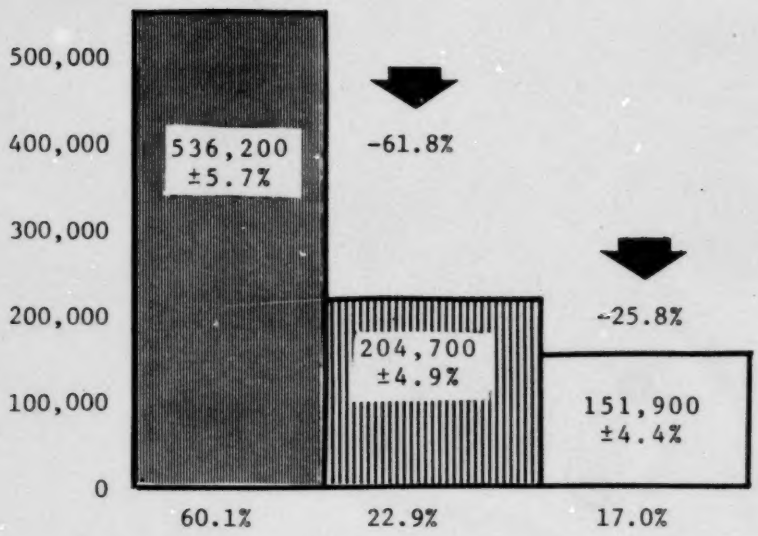
percentage of all institutions, we have a fairly even representation from different types of institutions.

Chart 1 shows the distribution of enrollments in undergraduate foreign language education for all languages. Based on the responses of the departments sampled, we have projected total enrollment figures. These are expressed in the chart with a standard error calculated at the 95% confidence level. If the responses are indeed representative, then we find that there are over half a million students at the first-year level in all languages. There are about 200,000 students at the second-year level. The third bar in the graph combines third- and fourth-year levels. You will note a drop in enrollment between first-year and second-year instruction of 63.2%. During our presentation of the interim report of this project--at the ACTFL session from which this collection of papers is derived--participants noted that this drop in enrollment should not be interpreted as a clear measure of attrition rates, as we cannot account for such factors as students who begin a language in their senior year (a figure that would depress our retention rates) or transfer students who begin their studies in a department at an advanced level (a figure that would inflate our estimated retention rate). We do not have a gauge to estimate whether one of these factors is more important than the other or whether they are more or less equal. Certainly in the less commonly taught languages--for that matter, even with Italian--we have considerable numbers of students who begin the language late in their education and are not likely to continue.

At this point, there were several variables we needed to consider. The first was language. Does attrition differ from one language to the next? Chart 2 shows the situation for six languages. As you can see, language is indeed an important variable. The top group of bars on Chart 2

Chart 1

DISTRIBUTION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENROLLMENTS



Figures expressed at 95% confidence level.

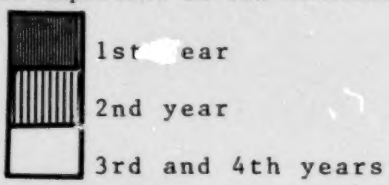


CHART 2

ATTRITION BY LANGUAGE

*Figures above the bars are projections from the sample, expressed with a standard error calculated at the 90% confidence level. (Bars not drawn to same scale)

**IHE means "institutions of higher education."

1st year 2nd year 3rd and 4th years

are drawn to a different scale than those in the bottom group because Italian, Latin, and Russian have very few students in comparison to French, German, and Spanish. The figures above the bars show the drop in enrollment rates from first to second year for each of these six languages. Again, the figures have been projected; that is, we took the responses from our sample, considered them proportionately, and projected national figures. By the way, the registrars at the various institutions served as the source of data for the enrollment census and the departments (in a few cases, a dean's office) gave us the information for the survey of enrollment distribution. You will note the number of institutions reporting enrollment distribution and a second figure indicating the number of institutions nationally that reported enrollments in the particular language during the fall of 1980. Remember that some smaller institutions may teach Russian, for example, every other year or even every third year.

The attrition rates range from 51.9% for French to 80.9% for Italian. As in Chart 1, the advanced level includes both third- and fourth-year courses.

In looking at the data, we found a number of institutions that have increases at the advanced level; that is, their enrollments at the second-year level were lower than at the combined third-and fourth-year level. Since I surmised that those institutions might have requirements, I decided to inquire about attrition rates at institutions with requirements. Unfortunately, our information on requirements is somewhat dated, since the last time we did a full-scale study of requirements was 1974-75. We have carried out two subsequent studies of departments that are members of the Association of Departments of Foreign Languages, and on the basis of these project that approximately 60% of all colleges do have a language requirement. (A new survey will cover requirements for B.A. and B.S.

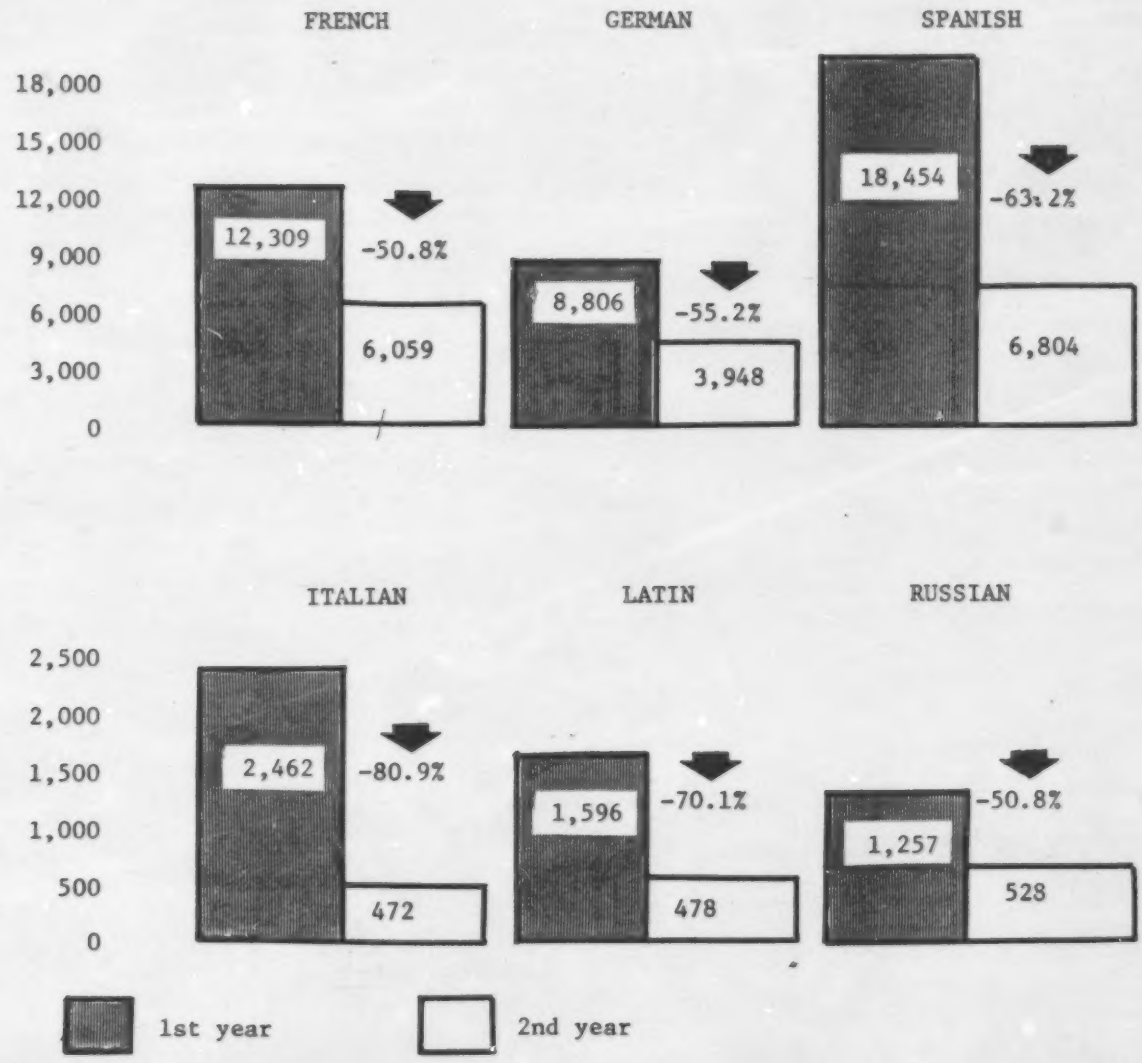
degrees, as of 1982-83.) One should ask about the specifics of requirements: one semester, one year, three semesters, two years, a certain number of quarters, and so forth. I have not been able to produce that kind of detail; but, when I reviewed the requirements of those institutions reporting an increase, I was able to uncover data that lead us to conclude that requirements are not necessarily conducive to retention. While the picture is very tentative, thanks to a seeming diversity of variables, we have some ground for optimism. We found, for example, that of the twenty-six institutions with an increase in French enrollment only eleven had requirements. Of the twenty-seven institutions reporting an increase in Spanish enrollment, only nine had requirements; of twenty-two in German, only ten had requirements; and of fourteen in Russian, only seven had language requirements. This leads me to think that there must be a number of institutional factors other than language requirements which contribute to retention or attrition.

Once we had information on requirements, we were able to subtract the group of institutions having requirements from the rest of our sample in order to see what we would have in a "free-market" economy where students are able to choose whatever courses they want to take. How many would continue with second-year or advanced language courses?

Chart 3 shows enrollment distribution in first- and second-year courses in the various languages under free-market conditions. The numbers are taken directly from our responding sample; they are not projections. The lowest attrition rate was in French, which fell off 50.8%. The highest attrition rate was in Italian, off 80.9%. I would remind you, though, that Italian is often not a student's first foreign language and is therefore likely not to be studied as long. Italian was followed by Latin, with 70.1%

CHART 3

ENROLLMENTS AT SAMPLED INSTITUTIONS WITHOUT REQUIREMENTS



The next problem was to consider institutional types. These data were available; we divided all the institutions of higher learning into those that offer an associate's degree (two-year colleges), those that offer a B.A. or an M.A., and those that offer a doctorate. We further subdivided the last category to isolate institutions offering a doctorate in a foreign language. We then considered two languages for which enrollment has especially suffered during the last ten years: German and Russian.

Thus, in Chart 4, you see categories for the four types of institutions and the attrition rates for each category. Please note that the information is least reliable for categories containing small responding samples.

Regarding Chart 4, I should add that the calculation of data is limited to a consideration of those institutions offering foreign language instruction at both the first-year and second-year levels. There were a few that offered a language at the intermediate level and not at the elementary level, but much more typical was the opposite problem, offering first-year instruction without subsequent instruction. That category of institution is indicated as a percentage of the sample in the figures to the right.

So here we have some of the variables. I believe that we shall profit in the future by considering other institutional factors as contributing to either retention or attrition.

Comments and Responses during the Original Presentation

(Data have been revised in this article to reflect the final survey results.)

COMMENT: I would like an explanation for the fact that in German, in the group from 2,000 to 10,000, the attrition rate is quite high, whereas in Russian it is considerably lower.

CHART 4

ATTRITION RATES AT VARIOUS TYPES OF INSTITUTIONS

(GERMAN AND RUSSIAN)

GERMAN

TYPE	NUMBER IN SAMPLE	ATTRITION RATE	DEPARTMENTS NOT OFFERING INTERMEDIATE COURSES
AII	6	59%	33%
AIII*	16	70.8%	37.5%
AIV	9	76.8%	67%
BII	6	67.4%	
BIII	23	59.3%	4.3%
BIV*	29	36.1%	13.8%
DI	4	**	
DII	5	64%	
DIII	12	56.2%	
DIV	5	43%	40%
PI	10	60.2%	
PII	7	49.1%	
PIII	2	**	

RUSSIAN

TYPE	NUMBER IN SAMPLE	ATTRITION RATE	DEPARTMENTS NOT OFFERING INTERMEDIATE COURSES
AII	3	**	66.7%
AIII	3	**	100%
BII	7	26.5%	42.9%
BIII	7	48.1%	57.1%
BIV	7	51.9%	14.3%
DI	6	75.3%	***
DII	7	71.8%	14.3%
DIII	6	54.3%	
PI	5	66.7%	
PIII	2	**	

A-Associate's Degree B-Bachelor's or Master's Degree
D-Doctor's Degree P-Doctor's Degree in a Foreign Language
I-Institution of over 20,000 FTE students
II-Institution of 10,000-20,000 FTE students
III-Institution of 2,000-10,000 FTE students
IV-Institution of fewer than 2,000 FTE students

*Some institutions showed an increase.
**If the sample contained fewer than 5 institutions, we considered the sample too small to be reliable.
***One institution reported enrollments at the advanced level but none at the intermediate level. This institution could not be considered in calculating the drop enrollment from 1st to 2nd year.

MÜLLER: There are only five institutions in this category responding for Russian. There are twenty responding for German. This could indicate a bias in response or simply an unreliable sample.

COMMENT: I think these attrition figures do not really reflect reality. In many institutions at the intermediate level you do get a number of people feeding in. For example, there are entering freshmen who have had sufficient training in high school to be able to begin college work with second-year courses. So the actual attrition is probably much higher than your figures indicate. If you eliminated those new students feeding in, we would know how many were actually dropping. Have you made an attempt to do this?

MÜLLER: No. I believe none will be made because I cannot conceive of asking the registrars or the chairmen for that kind of information.

COMMENT: I would like to know if the students enrolled in first year are in the first or second semester.

MÜLLER: They could be in either. If an institution offers a course numbered 101 and another numbered 102 in the same year/or within the same semester, the registrar [correction: department] reported the total enrollment for both of the courses. We did not distinguish between first semester and second semester. One reason is that we would have had to take account of quarter systems.

COMMENT: Our big attrition is between the first and second semesters. We have only two years of instruction at our community college. I wonder where all the people came from in the third-year level for those institutions showing an increase there. You mentioned requirements, but I still cannot imagine the paths by which they came.

COMMENT: They could have had four years of study in a good high school language program, or they might be community college transfers. Either group could enter at the third-year level with that background.

COMMENT: Well, they are better prepared than the students I deal with.

COMMENT: Yes, transfers seem never to work into the curriculum as they should.

MÜLLER: Do you know what I would have liked to see? You are from a community college, and this idea is for you. I would have loved to see more advanced-level enrollments reported by the two-year community colleges. But I have received chairmen's responses that said such things as, "This is a community college. We only offer two years of instruction."

COMMENT: Right.

MÜLLER: Well, what is the reason for not offering second and third year instead of first and second year?

COMMENT: (Laughter)

MÜLLER: Am I too idealistic? It worries me that the assumption is just accepted.

COMMENT: Yes, it is a pity that we make that assumption. But practically speaking, it is the only possibility.

COMMENT: I am with a four-year school here in Colorado, and we are an open-door institution as most community colleges are. The students we get, even if they have received four years of instruction in a foreign language in high school, do not have the skills to work profitably at the third-year level.

JOHNSON: We know we have a problem, and in this discussion, as well as in Kurt Müller's presentation, we begin to see some of its particularities. It is time to turn to some solutions. Professor Francis Valette from Northern Illinois University is chairman of a department that enjoys a relatively low attrition rate. He will tell us about some of the steps he and his colleagues have taken to retain students.

Francis Valette

RETENTION AND DROPOUT:

SOME REMARKS ON ONE DEPARTMENT'S EXPERIENCE

The dropout rate from the basic course sequences has not represented a significant problem in my department at Northern Illinois University. Although foreign language enrollments have fluctuated in the last few years, the dropout rate has varied slightly and has remained at an acceptable level. This situation may not be uncommon, particularly in institutions that have maintained a foreign language requirement.

Northern Illinois University is the second largest state-supported university in Illinois with an on-campus enrollment of 22,881 students (25,000 on and off-campus). Of the 18,000 undergraduate students, 8,700 are matriculated in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; 2,500 are pursuing a course of study leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree. These 2,500 students must fulfill a foreign language requirement equivalent to four semesters of instruction. The requirement may be met in the following manners:

1. Successful completion of a four semester course sequence at Northern.
2. Completion before admission of a four year course sequence in one language with no grade lower than C in an accredited high school.
3. Exemption by demonstrating on a placement test a level of competence equal to that obtained in the four-semester course sequence.

Students with fewer than four years of high school credits in one language must enter the sequence at Northern at the level indicated by the test result. Each semester 1,300 to 1,500 students enroll in the basic course sequences to fulfill the language requirement. The dropout

rate has fluctuated between 5.75% and 8.18% of the total enrollment in the basic course sequences. The average rate of 6.99% is comparable to the dropout rate in other required courses such as Rhetoric and Composition (5.40%), Fundamentals of Speech (4.0%) and College Algebra (8.70%). It is also consistent with the overall dropout rate of 5.12% in the College of Arts and Sciences.

TABLE 1

ENROLLMENT AND WITHDRAWALS IN 100/200 LEVEL COURSES

Semester	Enrollment	Withdrawals	%
Fall 1972	1412	105	7.5
Fall 1978	1419	95	6.66
Spring 1979	1244	72	5.78
Fall 1979	1319	108	8.18
Spring 1980	1381	108	7.82
Fall 1980	1579	116	7.34
Spring 1981	1538	95	6.17
Fall 1981	1394	93	6.67
Average Rate of Withdrawal			6.99%
Overall College of LA&S			5.12%

We have conducted an informal survey among students of the basic course sequences to help us identify some of the factors that may cause a student to drop a course. You are well acquainted with these factors, I am sure.

Academic Background and Preparation

Our student constituency is a mix from the northern Illinois rural area, from the city of Chicago, and from the more affluent suburbs. These

students enter the university with widely differing levels of academic background and preparation. This in itself is the fundamental problem. In general, however, we have found that it is the lack of awareness of the phenomenon of language, the lack of understanding of semantic structure and grammatical categories that will cause a student to become restless when confronted with grammatical concepts in a foreign language, and eventually withdraw from the course. I was very pleased to hear Jay Sommer this morning stress the importance of study habits. Most entering students have not acquired the study habits and the intellectual discipline necessary to study a language. Generally they lack curiosity and motivation. The result is that they fall victim to frustration and withdraw from the course.

Expectations About the Course

Students entering the basic course sequences sometimes have unrealistic expectations of the level of proficiency they will reach at the end of each course. When their achievement does not coincide with their expectation they get discouraged and withdraw from the course. To be sure, many students have no expectation at all; they feel that their time is being wasted with a superfluous requirement. They are marking time while putting forth only the effort necessary to obtain a passing grade; they will often drop a course if the grades received up to that point fall below the passing level.

Grade Expectation

There is a strong correlation between grades and dropout rate. In our department most students withdraw from a course at the end of the fourth or fifth week of class. This usually coincides with a grading period during which students may have had several short quizzes and

one-hour examinations. When the grades received do not exceed a D they often decide to drop the course.

Educational Aspirations

More and more students perceive the foreign language requirement as an unnecessary hinderance. They find it irrelevant to their career goals or vocational aspirations. These students will often transfer to a Bachelor of Science program where foreign languages are not required.

Socio-Cultural Integration

I refer here to minority students, Hispanic students most specifically. Hispanic students who already have a near-native level of fluency in the spoken language may have difficulty with reading, writing and grammatical concepts both in English and Spanish. They often feel acute emotional distress in the midst of English speakers who may perform better on written tests. We have tried to remedy this problem by offering a special course for Hispanic students.

Placement

I should say misplacement. This has been a vexing problem. Although we monitor the placement test very carefully and although we try to identify in each class the students who have been placed above or below their level, there are always a number of cases that remain unnoticed until they have dropped the course.

These are some of the factors that have been the cause for most of the dropouts from the basic course sequences in our department. Now I shall comment briefly on the measures we have taken to minimize the impact of attrition on the basic language courses.

Strict Adherence to Course Capacity Limits

In the last three years the overall university enrollment has increased by approximately 10%. Out of a sense of commitment and responsibility we tried to accommodate all the students requesting first- or second-year language courses by raising the section capacity from 25 to 28 and 30. Besides the pedagogical problems created by inflating course capacity, we realized that the dropout rate increased proportionately. For the last three semesters we have returned to the policy of enforcing the 25 student limit in all basic language courses. As a result, each semester 100 to 200 students are unable to enroll in our courses, but those who have been able to enroll seem more cautious about dropping because of the risk of being locked out the following semester.

Counseling

As mentioned above, we try in every section to identify students who have taken the placement test and who appear to have been misplaced. We interview these students and follow their progress closely during the first two weeks of the semester. If they have been placed at a level significantly above their ability, they are given special attention to remedy their deficiencies. If, however, students have been placed at a level below their ability, arrangements are made to transfer them to the next course in the sequence.

Study Strategies

In every class we advise students on how to study a foreign langauge and on how to prepare for tests. The department has established a peer tutoring service which seems to be helpful. More than anything else, it is the individual concern shown by the instructor that will encourage a weak student to remain in the class.

Clearly Defined Course Objectives and Grading Criteria

It is very important for students to know at the beginning of a course exactly what is expected of them and what to expect of us. Each class has a syllabus which attempts to be as informative and complete as possible. It includes a statement on the goals and objectives of the course, the texts used, the policy on class and language laboratory attendance, the policy on assignments, tests, the examination schedule, and the grading system.

One of our Spanish instructors, Susan Bauer, has developed a scheme which has proved to be very successful in twelve sections of elementary-intermediate Spanish. The dropout rate in these sections has been less than 1%. The salient features are an expectation sheet given to the students before each examination and a point system to determine the final grade (see Table 2). The expectation sheet includes the material covered in the test and sample questions. The students benefit from knowing precisely what will be demanded of them on the test and from being able to practice with sample questions. The grading scheme allows students to judge their progress toward the number of points needed to obtain a passing grade. Students in the sections where this scheme is used have responded very positively.

I offer these brief remarks as a basis for discussion and shall be happy to answer questions.

Thank you.

JOHNSON: I have a question. Is it possible for a student in the Liberal Arts to take a bachelor of science degree in, say, history?

VALETTE: No. There used to be a bachelor of science degree in history. This went out three or four years ago.

JOHNSON: English?

TABLE 2

STUDENT HANDOUT

Assignments:

Although no 'homework' papers will be collected, it will be expected that you will complete written work that will be covered in the next class session before coming to class. Work done in assignments will be covered in weekly quizzes.

Quizzes:

A quiz of 15 points will be given approximately every week emphasizing language usage and important active vocabulary. There will be no make-ups for whatever reason, but the lowest two quiz grades will be dropped in computing the final grade.

Examinations:

An hourly examination follows approximately each 4-week segment of the course. The final examination will only be partially cumulative. There will be no make-up exams. Exceptions to this policy will only be granted with prior approval. An expectation sheet outlining the content and format of each exam will be given out usually two class periods before the exam.

Exam I - September 26
Exam II - October 24
Exam III - November 24
Final Exam (see Fall schedule of classes)

*Note: There will be no Incompletes given in this course.

Mid-term Grades:

A mid-term grade will be given by October 1st so that you can better judge your standing in the class prior to the official University withdrawal date of October 3rd.

Final Grades:

Final grades will be determined by the total number of points earned during the semester. The point distribution and letter correlations are as follows:

Final Exam	100 points	
3 Hourly Exams	300 points	
8 of 10 15-point quizzes	120 points	
Class Participation	100 points	(includes attendance)
Laboratory	15 points	(one point/hour spent in lab; only
Compositions and handouts	65 points	one point/week can be earned)
Total Points	700 points	

630-700 - A (90 - 100%)
560-629 - B (80 - 89%)
490-559 - C (70 - 79%)
420-489 - D (60 - 69%)
419 and below - F

VALETTE: English? No, of course not.

JOHNSON: So for some people the language is absolutely required? They do not have the option of changing the degree title?

VALETTE: For the most part, this is true. However, students who enroll in a B.S. degree program have a math requirement.

HILDMAN: There are, of course, people who take your language courses who are not required to take them?

VALETTE: Correct.

HILDMAN: Have you ever looked at the differential drop rate between those who had to take foreign languages and those who did not have to take them?

VALETTE: No.

HILDMAN: And what was the source of your information on why people dropped? Did you interview them?

VALETTE: We interview students. We receive a periodic computer printout of the students who drop our courses up to the deadline. By the deadline, we have, I think, four reports; and we try. We do not reach everyone, but we try to find out why they have dropped the course. Now, some disappear never to be seen.

COMMENT: Have you made any attempt to concentrate on the effect of grades on the attrition rate in any semi-systematic way?

VALETTE: No. However, I was looking, before coming to Denver, at the attrition rate in other colleges of Northern Illinois and also at the percentage of F's given. There seems to be a correlation. Our colleagues in the School of Education last spring semester gave .78% F's, and the attrition rate was 2%. As the percentage of F's went up in other departments and other colleges, so did the withdrawal rate. So I don't know. I have not done any systematic study,

but there seems to be a correlation. Also, interviews with students have convinced me that many leave because they feel they will endanger their grade point average if they stay on.

JOHNSON: Thank you. I am sure we all appreciate your practical advice and will benefit from your experience.

Our next presenter is Lee Hildman. He is a psychologist and my colleague. He will report on a pilot study. You will hear about background factors as they do and do not correlate to dropouts.

Lee K. Hildman and Roger Johnson, Jr.

SOCIAL, PERSONAL, AND EDUCATIONAL FACTORS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO DROPOUTS FROM FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES: A PILOT STUDY

The problem of large numbers of dropouts from first-year foreign language classes has been widely discussed. The problem is especially severe at colleges and universities which do not require two or more years of foreign language study for graduation. Attempts have been made to combat the problem through innovative teaching procedures, intensive tutoring, extensive use of language laboratories and more "interesting" texts. Despite these efforts the problem has remained severe at many universities, including the University of Southern Mississippi.

During the summer of 1981 Roger Johnson, Jr. and I initiated a pilot study to evaluate the materials and procedures for a proposed two-year study of the problem. This paper reports the results of the pilot study.

The University of Southern Mississippi is a doctoral degree granting insitution currently growing at about 2% per year. The Foreign Language

Department is located in the College of Liberal Arts. It offers master's degrees in several language areas. Undergraduate students can obtain a degree (BS) in any major except language without taking any foreign language courses. Thus, all foreign language students are either undergraduate elective students, language majors, or graduate students meeting the graduate language requirement.

During the summer of 1981 there were five classes available to us for data collection. The total numbers of students enrolled in each class, the number who agreed to serve as subjects, and the number and percent of drops are displayed in TABLE 1. The numbers in parentheses after the names of the languages indicate the pace of the course; a (1) indicates that the class continued through the entire term at regular pace, a (2) indicates a double speed course which included the first and second courses in the language, and a (3) indicates a triple-paced course including the

TABLE 1

Number and Percent of Drops by Subjects and Term

Language	Total Students	Total Subjects	Drops I	Drops II	%
Swahili (1)	6	6	1	-	17
German (3)	13	13	0	2	15
Spanish (2)	14	12	8	-	67
Spanish (2)	23	22	8	-	36
French (3)	23	22	4	7	50
Total	79	75	21	9	40
				30	

first three courses in the language. The Roman numerals indicate when the drops occurred; 21 by the end of the first term or nine by the end of the second course. There were no additional drops during the third course. The overall 40 percent dropout rate is higher than most schools report, but by no means the highest.

This does not present the entire picture, however. The subjects did not drop out at a uniform rate across all enrollment categories. As may be seen in TABLE 2, undergraduates dropped out at over twice the rate of graduate students. The numbers in parentheses indicate the numbers of students in each enrollment category who did not complete the course. Under "classification," N stands for non-degree students.

TABLE 2

Number and Percent of Drops by Subject and Student Classification

	Total	Classification					
Language	Subjects	F	S	J	S	N	G
Swahili	6	-	1	1(1)	2	2	-
German	13	-	-	-	4(1)	2(1)	7
Spanish	12	1(1)	3(3)	5(2)	2(1)	1(1)	-
Spanish	22	3	2(1)	2(1)	4(1)	2(1)	9(4)
French	22	3(2)	4(2)	4(4)	2(2)	1	8(1)
Totals	75	7(3)	10(6)	12(8)	14(5)	8(3)	24(5)
Percent		43	60	67	36	38	21
				49			

The classroom is a social setting, and in most social settings first impressions are important. We were interested in exploring the differences in the way those who dropped and those who stayed perceived their instructors on the first day of class. On that day we asked them to complete a rather long questionnaire which explored, among other things, their first impressions of their instructors. We gave them seven pairs of adjectives separated by a seven-point scale. TABLE 3 reports the results for all classes combined. There were no significant differences. Both groups tended to see their instructors as friendly, open, interesting, competent, slightly strict, and slightly easygoing.

TABLE 3

Initial Impression of Instructor

Adjectives	Stay	Drop	
Friendly-Unfriendly	1.32	1.61	NS
Strict-Lenient	3.70	3.92	NS
Open-Closed	1.88	1.85	NS
Aggressive-Easygoing	4.34	4.54	NS
Interesting-Dull	1.71	1.86	NS
Incompetent-Competent	6.51	6.58	NS

These same data allowed us also to compare impressions of instructors in different languages on the first day of class. TABLE 4 shows that there were significant differences between initial impressions of instructors on two sets of adjectives: strict-lenient and open-closed. The German instructors were seen by all the students, those who dropped and those who stayed combined, as being more strict and more closed than the

Spanish instructors. The French instructors did not significantly differ from the German or Spanish instructors on any of adjective pairs.

TABLE 4

Initial Impressions of Various Language Teachers

Impression	SPN	FRE	GER	
Friendly-Unfriendly	1.4	1.4	1.2	NS
Strict-Lenient	4.1	3.5	2.9	.025
Open-Closed	1.7	1.9	2.7	.10
Aggressive-Easygoing	4.4	4.7	3.6	NS
Interesting-Dull	1.8	1.2	2.0	NS
Incompetent-Competent	6.4	6.6	6.9	NS

We thought another factor that might be important was the attitudes students brought with them when they enrolled in a foreign language class--their preconceptions about the language they had chosen to study. The questionnaire contained eleven pairs of adjectives denoting attitudes about language, again separated by a seven-point scale. TABLE 5 reviews the results of the language comparisons for those who dropped and those who stayed. Three pairs of adjectives approached significance; those who dropped thought of foreign language as more boring, dull, and plain than those who stayed. The remaining comparisons did not approach significance.

However, when the data for those who dropped and those who stayed were combined and comparisons were made among attitudes toward the various languages, additional significant differences emerged. Compared to German, which was thought to be quite difficult, French was thought of as only

TABLE 5

Attitudes About Foreign Language

Adjectives	Stay	Drop	
Exotic-Ordinary	3.92	4.21	NS
Easy-Hard	4.50	4.79	NS
Strange-Normal	4.61	4.79	NS
Fun-Boring	2.23	3.00	.04
Rigid-Loose	3.88	3.92	NS
Feminine-Masculine	4.04	3.71	NS
Artistic-Scientific	3.10	3.29	NS
Interesting-Dull	2.00	2.79	.06
Useful-Useless	2.33	2.50	NS
Sophisticated-Plain	3.15	2.43	.05
Liberal-Conservative	3.38	3.50	NS

moderately difficult. German was thought to be more masculine than French, more scientific than French or Spanish, less interesting than French or Spanish, and less sophisticated than French. The magnitude of the artistic-scientific difference was especially noteworthy. TABLE 6 displays these data.

Also included on the questionnaire was a miscellaneous group of questions concerning foreign language background, study plans, and grade expectations. TABLE 7 indicates that only two items concerned with previous exposure to foreign languages even approached showing a significant difference between those who dropped and those who stayed, and these were very modest levels of significance.

TABLE 6

Attitudes about Foreign Languages

Adjectives	Spn	Fre	Ger	
Exotic-Ordinary	4.1	3.8	4.5	NS
Easy-Hard	4.2	4.8	5.6	.01
Strange-Normal	4.8	4.8	4.0	NS
Fun-Boring	2.7	2.2	3.4	NS
Rigid-Loose	3.8	3.7	3.5	NS
Feminine-Masculine	4.0	3.5	4.4	.10
Artistic-Scientific	2.7	2.8	4.9	.001
Interesting-Dull	2.1	2.1	3.1	.10
Useful-Useless	2.1	2.3	3.2	NS
Sophisticated-Plain	3.1	2.4	3.3	.10
Liberal-Conservative	3.5	3.1	3.8	NS

TABLE 7

Factors Related to Foreign Language Study

Factor	Stay	Drop	
Years of Foreign Language Study?	.79	.36	.14
How Proficient?	2.15	1.36	.19
How Competent Expect to be at End of Term?	3.85	3.79	NS
Expect to Study How Many Hours Out of Class?	9.85	10.07	NS
How Difficult Expect Language to be?	4.55	4.38	NS
What Grade Expected?	3.66 (B+)	4.00 (A+)	NS
Plan to Continue Language Study? (1 = yes, 2 = no)	1.19	1.29	NS
Do You Have Talent for Languages? (1 = yes, 2 = no)	1.47	1.50	NS
Number of Friends Who Speak Foreign Language	1.50	1.60	NS

We suspected that those students who had better English language skills would do better in foreign languages or at least be more comfortable there and would, therefore, be more likely to stay. As may be seen in TABLE 8, this was partially supported. Those who stayed had significantly better self-reported grade point averages in high school English. However, a short test on four aspects of English grammar did not yield significant differences between the drops and those who stayed.

TABLE 8

English Factors Relating to Foreign Language Retention

Factor	Stay	Drop	
"I'd normally finish the job on time"			
Prepositional Phrase	.83	.71	NS
(1 = right, 0 = wrong)			
Direct Object	.81	.86	NS
"I'd" = What words?	.95	.79	NS
What part of speech is "normally?"	.80	.64	NS
GPA in H. S. English	3.51	2.93	.01

We also suspected that those who stayed might favor different leisure-time activities from those who dropped. TABLE 9 shows that our suspicions were groundless. Not only were the differences between those who stayed and those who dropped uniformly insignificant, but activity levels tended to be low--at least for the activities we sampled.

TABLE 9

Leisure Activities Related to Retention

Activity	Stay	Drop	
Jogging	.40	.37	NS
Swimming	.42	.33	NS
Tennis	.22	.20	NS
Team Sports	.18	.23	NS
Bridge	.07	.03	NS
Backgammon	.27	.23	NS
Painting/Drawing	.16	.23	NS
Playing Instrument	.36	.40	NS
Singing	.27	.37	NS
Acting	.18	.13	NS
Typing	.60	.60	NS
Repairing Autos	.18	.10	NS
Sewing	.31	.43	NS
Politics	.24	.23	NS
Gourmet Cooking	.18	.30	NS
Creative Writing	.31	.33	NS
Photography	.36	.23	NS
Fishing/Hunting	.18	.23	NS

It seemed reasonable to us that those students who had traveled most extensively would be more likely to remain in foreign language study than those who had not traveled. TABLE 10 shows that this idea was partially supported; those who stayed in class were significantly more likely to have traveled to England or Europe than those who dropped. This was not true for travel 500 or more miles from home, to Canada, Latin America, or to the Middle East.

TABLE 10

Travel Related to Retention

Travel Destination	Stay	Drop	
500 + Miles from Home	.89	.99	NS
Canada	.33	.27	NS
Latin America	.29	.30	NS
England	.24	.10	.08
Europe	.31	.13	.07
Middle East	.04	.03	NS

We wondered if those who remained in foreign language classes watched different television programs from those who dropped. As TABLE 11 indicates, they did not except in one instance: Significantly more of those who remained in class watched "Firing Line" than those who dropped. We must note, however, that fewer students watched this program than any other on our list--only seven percent of the total group of subjects.

TABLE 11

TV Watching and Language Retention

TV Program	Stay	Drop	
Evening News	.78	.87	NS
"60 Minutes"	.40	.40	NS
Soap Operas	.33	.47	NS
"Masterpiece Theatre"	.18	.20	NS
Sports Programs	.29	.30	NS
"Three's Company"	.16	.17	NS
"Dallas"	.13	.23	NS
"Firing Line"	.07	.00	.02
Saturday Morning Cartoons	.09	.13	NS
Late Movie	.49	.47	NS

All of the information reported to this point came from a lengthy questionnaire administered during the first class period of the term. During the same period we asked our subjects to complete the Survey of Study Habits and Attitudes (SSHA) (Brown & Holtzman, 1953) and the state scale of the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) (Spielberger, 1968). We asked our subjects to complete the trait scale of the STAI and the Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI) (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1963) at home that evening and return them to class the next day.

The SSHA measures four aspects of study characteristics: Delay Avoidance, Work Methods, Teacher Approval and Educational Acceptance. We thought there would be differences on these scales between those who completed the foreign language courses and those who did not. As may be seen

in TABLE 12, our beliefs were only modestly supported: Differences between the two groups on Work Methods and Teacher Approval did show a tendency toward significance. Various combinations of the four scales did no better.

TABLE 12

Study Orientation and Language Retention

SSHA Measures	Percentiles Stay	Drop	
Delay Avoidance	50	45	NS
Work Methods	70	55	.15
Teacher Approval	50	35	.20
Education Acceptance	50	40	NS
Study Habits (DA + WM)	65	50	NS
Study Attitudes (TA + EA)	50	40	NS
Study Orientation (SH + SA)	60	45	.22

On the STAI (Table 13) there was no difference in the reported general anxiety level, but the reported feelings of anxiety in the classroom situation did tend toward being significantly different between those who stayed and those who left.

TABLE 13

State-Trait Anxiety Inventory Results and Class Retention

Condition	Stay	Drop	
How I Feel Generally			
(Trait)	35.5	36.5	NS
How I Feel Now			
(State)	35.7	39.4	.30

TABLE 14 outlines the differences which were presented on the EPI between those who dropped and those who stayed. There was no difference between our groups on the Introversion-Extroversion scale, but a modest difference appeared on the Neuroticism scale, suggesting that those who dropped were slightly more neurotic than those who stayed. For comparison, two other sets of data are reported. The "Fall Sample" is preliminary data from 144 subjects collected in the same manner during the Fall 1981 term. In this case there is no difference in Neuroticism, but a respectable difference does appear on the Introversion-Extroversion scale. This suggests that the "Fall Sample" drops are slightly more extroverted than those who stayed. Also reported to provide a baseline are the Mississippi norms (Lowe & Hildman, 1972).

The final step in our data-gathering procedure was to contact the students who had dropped from the courses and interview them about their reasons for leaving. The interviews were done by a psychology graduate

TABLE 14

Eysenck Personality Scale Scores and Class Retention

Scale	Stay	Drop	
Introversion-Extroversion (E)			
(1) Summer Sample	11.1	11.2	NS
(2) Fall Sample	11.9	13.3	.11
(N = 144)			
(3) MS Norms	13.5		
(N = 1644)			
Neuroticism (N)			
(1) Summer Sample	10.1	12.0	.29
(2) Fall Sample	10.2	11.0	NS
(N = 144)			
(3) MS Norms	10.9		
(N = 1644)			

student using a standardized interview protocol. TABLE 15 reports the reasons given by the students for dropping. It should be noted that a few students could not be contacted, and in several cases the students gave two equally important reasons.

The main reasons for dropping centered around the unexpected difficulty level of the language courses and the amount of study effort required to keep up.

TABLE 15

Reasons for Dropping Class or Not Completing Sequence

Reason	Number
Took too much time	4
More difficult than expected	3
Could not keep up	5
Scheduling conflict	1
Did not meet expectations about language study	2
Scheduled too many hours	3
High level of class participation	2
Teacher talked too fast	1
Needed time for qualifier	1
Had to get job	4
Removed F or incomplete	2
Tired of school - went to Houston	1

We had two purposes for conducting this pilot study. The more important was to assess the questionnaires we had developed and the scheduling problems involved in collecting information during the first few classes of the term. In general, we found that the instructors were helpful and generous with access to their classes. They also helped in collecting the instruments which we asked the students to complete at home. As TABLE 1 indicates, the students were also helpful; 75 out of the 79 potential subjects chose to participate.

The questionnaire, however, proved to be too long to be managed easily in less than an entire class period. We have since revised the

questionnaire to make it easier to read and, on the basis of the results reported herein, have removed some items which showed little effectiveness in discriminating between the two groups of students.

We were also interested in the actual results of the questionnaire. Many of the items tended in the anticipated direction but did not reach a difference level which was significant. In part this is due to the relatively small numbers of subjects in the groups, but the most important circumstance that tended to suppress the significance of existing differences was the unusually large variances in the groups. In some cases there was almost as much variation among the group responses as there was between the groups.

These results did suggest, however, that this line of research is worth pursuing. Thus, we began a two-year project using students from all of the beginning language classes at the University, starting in the fall of 1981. Preliminary results (part of which are reported as "Fall sample" in TABLE 14) suggest that the larger sample will provide more stable results. The analysis of these data is continuing, and results will be reported after the last data are collected in spring of 1983.

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JOHNSON: Thank you. We are short of time and must press on. Our next speaker is Gerald Irvin, who, as you will recall, is presenting a paper prepared by Professor Leon Twarog of Ohio State University.

GERALD IRVIN AND LEON TWAROG: RETENTION AND TAMBSPI AT OHIO STATE

We have been talking about retention and dropout with some muddying of the waters. Some of us speak about dropping within a semester and some about dropping from term to term. These are two different animals. As Dr. Twarog's paper is going to point out, attrition figures are not accurate if students can leave and come back to the language sequence. We like to call this a stopout rather than a dropout. Two weeks ago I visited a Russian 102 class and recognized a student there. When the class was over, I walked over to him and said, "I know you from somewhere." He replied, "Yes, I had Russian 101 with you three years ago."

In the next few moments I shall describe and analyze retention and dropout in the six foreign languages taught at Ohio State by the method known as TAMBSPI, Teacher-Assisted, Mastery-Based, Self-Paced Instruction--Individualized Instruction to the rest of us.

The program allows for variable credit and a variety of learning goals. Students may visit the learning centers any time they are open, from twenty to forty hours per week. There are no scheduled class meetings. The TAMBSPI Program is described in full in the Spring 1981 issue of the Modern Language Journal.

It is relatively simple to calculate retention and dropout when all of the instruction is being delivered via the classroom. But as soon as one adds the individualized component, matters become complicated. Students can drop out of a classroom section at any time and enroll in the individualized program without losing any of the credit they have already earned. Students may also transfer to the classroom from the optional individualized

program. In the latter case, however, they can only transfer at the beginning of the quarter and then only if they have completed the requisite credit hours by that time. In any case, they can go both ways. This is going to muddy the waters even further.

Several other factors must also be considered. First, classroom sections complete five hours of credit each quarter. Students in the TAMBSPI Program may take three full quarters to complete these five credit hours. In such instances a student may be counted as a warm body in each of the three quarters, and that distorts the figures. On the other hand, an individual who is recorded three times might not have been recorded at all if he or she had dropped out of the classroom section originally. It must be admitted that all too often TAMPSPI is the last stop before a student gives up language training and drops out.

At least two other factors influence retention and dropout at Ohio State. The College of Arts and Sciences has never eliminated the foreign language requirement, as have several of the institutions represented here today. A bachelor of arts degree includes twenty hours, that is, four courses, so that students cannot afford to continue dropping courses indefinitely.

A third factor is that most elementary and intermediate language courses at Ohio State are taught by graduate students. Special workshops for new teaching assistants have helped reduce attrition, we think, because of the teaching skills developed in the two-week session.

The case of Arabic at Ohio State offers a dramatic illustration of how an individualized program can help maintain total enrollment. In TABLE 1, you can see that in 1980-81 there was a single classroom section during the Autumn Quarter. Anyone not enrolling in this section or entering the university at midyear had to wait for one full year before beginning a

study of Arabic. The result was that a student interested in Arabic might select some other language simply on the basis of its being available. That, at least, would have been the situation without TAMBSPI. In 1980-81, at the same time that Arabic 101.01, 102.01, and 103.01 were offered, all four of the TAMBSPI courses were available. During the three quarters, 82%, 75%, and 82% respectively of the enrollment in Arabic 101-104 was in the TAMBSPI Program. (The .01 designation indicates our classroom track. The .51 designation is the individualized track.) With the exception of those students who wanted to learn Arabic so badly that they were willing to arrange their entire schedules around Arabic, students registered for the TAMBSPI Program might never have selected Arabic as a language to study.

Out of a sample of fourteen TAMBSPI students who are in fact presently enrolled (Autumn Quarter 1981), eight of them stated that they would not have undertaken the study of Arabic at all if the TAMBSPI option were not available. They would have probably taken another language to meet the requirement, and the college, one may postulate, would not be losing any credit hours in language. This is a possibility of course. The fact, however, is that eight of the students in our sample indicated that they were not taking Arabic to meet the language requirement. If the same proportions hold for the total thirty students enrolled in the TAMBSPI Program in Arabic, eighteen of the thirty would have been lost without TAMBSPI. There is no question that for Arabic the program does enhance and stabilize enrollment.

The case of Arabic in 1980-81 provides further evidence of how TAMBSPI helps retain students. Arabic 104.01, the classroom track, was scheduled for Autumn 1980 as a normal continuation of Arabic 103, which was taught the previous year. But only two students enrolled. It was more cost effective to cancel the classroom section and to put those two students with

TABLE 1

ARABIC ENROLLMENTS 1980-1981

	AUTUMN			WINTER			SPRING		
	14th Day	Final	% Retention	14th Day	Final	% Retention	14th Day	Final	% Retention
Classroom									
101.01	10	8	80	-	-	-	-	-	-
102.01	-	-	-	12	11	92	-	-	-
103.01	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	7	100
104.01	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	10	8	80	12	11	92	7	7	100
TAMBSPI									
101.51	17	22	129	16	13	81	14	18	129
102.51	16	7	44	8	8	100	10	7	70
103.51	5	2	40	7	5	71	6	4	67
104.51	3	3	100	4	3	75	1	2	200
Totals	41	34	83	35	29	83	31	31	100
COMBINED TOTALS	51	42	82	47	40	85	38	38	100

the one who had enrolled for the TAMBSPI option at that level. The record shows that all three completed their work during that quarter. At an institution without the TAMBSPI option the course would probably have been cancelled, and later low enrollments would serve as the basis for elimination of the entire Arabic program.

TABLE 2 shows the enrollments in Russian for the first six courses, and it indicates how TAMBSPI can help with retention. Although an argument can be made for offering the first four courses each quarter, since these consitute the language requirement, it is very difficult to do so and maintain articulation with the higher level courses. Russian 407.01, the classroom section scheduled for winter, had only two students. The classroom section was cancelled, and the two students enrolled in the TAMBSPI Program. The same situation occurred in the fifth quarter course, Russian 405.01. During the summer of 1980, when enrollment for an intensive Russian course (three hours a day) did not justify the offering, interested students were placed in the TAMBSPI Program and given special treatment with one hour per day in the learning center reserved especially for their use. Although some students were disappointed at the cancellation, they still had the option of completing the same amount of work in Russian.

TABLE 3 gives summary data on actual enrollments for the six languages for which we have TAMBSPI Programs and a comparison of attrition rates. Attrition is here defined as the difference between the official enrollment figure on the fourteenth day of class and the figure on the final roster at the ninth week of class. As one might expect, Arabic, which is offered in a single section in the autumn with continuation into the winter and spring, has the highest percentage of its enrollment in the TAMBSPI Program. French and Spanish, which are offered virtually every hour of

TABLE 2

RUSSIAN ENROLLMENTS 1980-1981

	AUTUMN			WINTER			SPRING		
	14th Day	Final	% Retention	14th Day	Final	% Retention	14th Day	Final	% Retention
Classroom									
101.01	75	61	81	31	29	94	30	26	87
102.01	12	10	83	48	44	92	21	21	100
103.01	11	11	100	7	8	114	23	18	78
104.01	12	12	100	9	8	89	8	6	75
405.01	4	3	75	11	9	81	-	-	-
407.01	3	3	100	-	-	-	7	6	85
111	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	13	93
Totals	117	100	85	106	98	92	103	90	87
TAMBSPI									
101.51	34	24	71	23	16	70	17	14	82
102.51	18	13	72	14	12	86	12	9	75
103.51	12	11	92	12	9	75	5	6	120
104.51	11	8	73	16	13	81	13	14	108
405.51	2	2	100	1	2	200	6	5	83
407.51	2	2	100	2	1	50	2	1	50
Totals	79	60	76	68	53	78	55	49	89
COMBINED TOTALS	196	160	82	174	151	87	158	139	88

TABLE 3

ATTRITION RATES FOR CLASSROOM AND TAMBSPI, 1980-81

Term	Combined Total	TAMBSPI Total	% in TAMBSPI	% Classroom Attrition	% TAMBSPI Attrition
ARABIC 101-104					
Autumn	51	41	82	20	17
Winter	47	35	75	8	17
Spring	38	31	82	0	0
GERMAN 101-102					
Autumn	425	105	25	8	13
Winter	403	110	27	16	12
Spring	299	93	31	13	13
FRENCH 101-104					
Autumn	1,116	212	19	11	28
Winter	1,082	233	22	11	34
Spring	956	194	20	13	28
SPANISH 101-103					
Autumn	1,352	264	20	10	33
Winter	1,343	260	19	16	29
Spring	1,214	261	22	12	30
RUSSIAN 101-407					
Autumn	196	60	30	15	25
Winter	174	68	39	8	23
Spring	172	55	31	12	11
LATIN 101-103					
Autumn	207	123	59	21	15
Winter	207	120	58	18	12
Spring	178	111	62	16	5
GRAND TOTAL	9,460	2,376	25		

the day and evening, have approximately 20% of their enrollments in the TAMBSPI Programs. Somewhat more than 30% of the Russian enrollment and approximately 28% of the German enrollment are in the TAMBSPI Programs. The attrition rate for French and Spanish in the TAMBSPI Programs is approximately two and a half that of the classroom. This suggests that many of these dropouts may very well be students who have taken TAMBSPI as a last resort and are already on their way out of the university.

Russian and Arabic, which generally suffer very high attrition in college programs, have a very low classroom attrition rate. Arabic maintains this low rate for the TAMBSPI Program as well. One reason for the low attrition rate in Russian is that classroom teachers have been instructed to find those students having difficulties as early as possible and to suggest their transferral to the TAMBSPI Program. These students frequently make the change before the fourteenth day of class and do not enter the statistics for attrition from the classroom. These students do appear frequently as part of the picture of attrition from TAMBSPI, and we have corroboration from a questionnaire which indicated that half of our dropouts from TAMBSPI had previously transferred from the classroom to TAMBSPI at the suggestion of a teacher.

In the Latin program, teachers make the suggestion, "You are failing. Why don't you try the self-paced instruction program and go at your own rate?" These suggestions are generally made after the fourteenth day of enrollment with the result that classroom attrition is higher than that in the TAMBSPI option.

German, remarkably enough, has about the same attrition rate for the classroom and TAMBSPI. For the less commonly taught languages, there is no question that the TAMBSPI programs do reduce attrition and do stabilize

enrollments. This means that many students who would ordinarily be lost to a language program do learn the language of their choice.

Enrollment data, however, cannot tell the full story behind the TAMBSPI programs. SAMPLE reproduces a questionnaire administered to students in eight TAMBSPI programs. TABLE 4 shows the tabulated results. Most of us had always assumed that TAMBSPI attracted primarily those students who had found the classroom either too fast or too slow. But it turns out that the most cited reason for taking the invidualized option is that students prefer to work on their own. Sixty-nine percent named this reason; followed by 53% who were there because of schedule conflicts; 39% for the individual attention; and 34% because of the eighty-percent passing rule. Fifty-three of the 222 students, 29% of them, were not using the language studied via TAMBSPI to meet a language requirement, a significant number in a university where the College of Arts and Sciences has a language requirement. We at Ohio State are certain that the TAMBSPI programs are a positive element, and shortly we shall add four courses of Chinese and six courses of Polish to our offerings.

It would be wrong to leave you with the impression that individualized instruction, by itself, offers a magic formula or that individualized instruction is something that can be set on course and allowed to happen. Excellent materials do contribute much, but the most important factor is the presence of excellent teachers dedicated to the mission and ready to help the slower students. Important for us has been the enthusiastic and supportive role of senior faculty members. In Latin, for example, where senior faculty members regularly work in the learning centers, the productivity of students is almost the same as that of the students enrolled in the classroom sections. (We define productivity as the number

SAMPLE

Questionnaire for Students Enrolled in Courses of Individualized Instruction in Foreign Languages at The Ohio State University
Autumn Quarter 1981

Ohio State has the largest program of individualized instruction in foreign languages in the United States. Others are interested in emulating our efforts and keep asking questions about our programs, and in particular about the reasons students select or elect I.I. over the traditional classroom mode of instruction. This quarter we want to compile such data for our own use and for the use of our colleagues. Summaries of the data will also be available at the Learning Centers. Please spend about 5 minutes of your time in answering the following questions.

Name (optional) _____ Course(s) _____

Rank (Freshman, Sophomore, Jr., Sr., Grad. Student, Prof. Student) _____

College _____

1. Is this your first experience with I.I.? Yes ___ No ___
   If your answer is "No", please state other courses you have taken.

   _____

   _____

2. Will you be using this course to help fulfill a language requirement?
   Yes ___ No ___

3. In the following check all appropriate lines.
   I have selected the I.I. Option because:

   ___ I do not like the classroom.
   ___ The regular classroom is much too slow for me.
   ___ The regular classroom is too fast for me.
   ___ I prefer to work on my own.
   ___ I like the 80%-for-passing rule.
   ___ I have schedule conflicts.
   ___ This course is only offered in the I.I. option this quarter.
   ___ I get more individual attention in the I.I. course.
   ___ Other: Please specify. _____

4. Did you transfer from a classroom section into I.I.? Yes ___ No ___

5. Would you have undertaken the study of this language if the I.I. option were not available? Yes ___ No ___

6. Additional comments:

   _____

   _____

   _____

TABLE 4

QUESTIONS	Languages:	Arabic	French	German	Latin	Russian	Spanish	Totals
	# of Students in Sample:	14	55	25	41	42	45	222
1. Is this your first experience with I.I.?		43%	29%	28%	22%	26%	38%	30%
	No answers.	6	16	7	9	11	17	66
2. Will you be using this course to help fulfill a lang. req.?		57%	22%	28%	7%	31%	20%	23%
	No answers.	8	12	7	3	13	9	52
3. In the following check all appropriate lines. I have selected the I.I. Option because:								
I do not like the classroom.		7%	27%	20%	7%	14%	18%	17%
		1	15	5	3	6	8	38
The regular classroom is too slow for me.		21%	13%	16%	10%	7%	9%	11%
		3	7	4	4	3	4	25
The regular classroom is too fast for me.		14%	16%	8%	15%	14%	24%	16%
		2	9	2	6	6	11	36
I prefer to work on my own.		71%	76%	80%	61%	57%	71%	69%
		10	42	20	25	24	32	153
I like the 80% for passing rule.		50%	35%	40%	12%	33%	44%	34%
		7	19	10	5	14	20	75
I have schedule conflicts.		64%	44%	52%	68%	57%	42%	53%
		9	24	13	28	24	19	117
This course is offered only in the I.I. Option this quarter.					2%			.5%
					1			1
I get more individual attention in the I.I. course.		21%	27%	36%	32%	50%	56%	39%
		3	15	9	13	21	25	86
4. Did you transfer from a classroom section to I.I.?		7%	24%	12%	10%	50%	31%	25%
	Yes answers.	1	13	3	4	21	14	56
5. Would you have undertaken study of this lang. if the I.I. option were not available?		57%	13%	36%	22%	26%	18%	23%
	No answers.	8	7	9	9	11	8	52
Of students from colleges other than UVC-ASC.		50%	18%	16%	15%	29%	20%	22%
		7	10	4	6	12	9	48
Of students not using I.I. course to satisfy language requirements.		57%	22%	28%	10%	31%	20%	29%
		8	12	7	4	13	9	53

of quarter hours completed during a quarter.) In the final analysis it is the teacher who counts most in keeping attrition down in classrooms and in the TAMBSPI programs.

Thank you very much.

JOHNSON: And thank you for delivering an exciting paper so eloquently. I fear that our time grows short and that we must press on with the scheduled program. I will recommend most heartily the article in MLJ, and I recommend that you accept Gerald Irvin's invitation to write for more information.

You ended your presentation by pointing out the importance of enthusiastic teachers dedicated to helping students learn, Gerald. It is appropriate for us to hear now about the experience of Otto Johnston at the University of Florida. He will describe the effect of the intensive language model on retention. The model is, of course, derived from your friend and mine, John Rassias.

OTTO JOHNSTON: EFFECTS OF THE DARTMOUTH INTENSIVE LANGUAGE MODEL

In December 1977 the Department of Germanic and Slavic languages at the University of Florida received a $6,000 Exxon Impact Grant to introduce the Dartmouth Intensive Language Model (DILM) developed by John Rassias at Dartmouth College. We started out with a group of about twenty-seven students in the summer of 1978. After three and a half years, we have expanded the model to include the entire three-quarter sequence in German. We have also implemented the DILM in Russian, Polish, Dutch, and Swedish. The DILM has proven to be the greatest enrollment builder, the most successful enrollment retainer, and the biggest blow to attrition that we have had.

The DILM promotes intensely personal interraction between teacher and student. During the first hour, a "master teacher" presents new material which contains a number of surprises. No explanation lasts more than ten minutes. After this session the students meet for an hour in smaller groups with an "apprentice teacher" who drills the material and helps the participant with pronunciation.

I have appeared in the middle of a German class taught by a colleague as Wilhelm Tell or as Faust being chased by the Devil. We have tried every kind of surprise in an effort to keep attention focused on what we are doing. Apprentice teachers are undergraduates who have had the course and have been specially trained in workshops offered at the end of each semester.

The DILM rests on the principle that students must learn a foreign language in existential situations; i.e. those involving life or death. For example, in German it is not easy to give directions. The prepositions involved in explaining locations govern different cases depending upon the verb and what kind of movement is involved. To make this an existential situation for students, we do the following: after presenting the material, we put eggs on the floor in a typical master class and have one student give a blindfolded classmate directions. If the one mishears the verbal commands or if the other gives the wrong directions, somebody steps on the eggs. Another existential game involves one student leading another between two bayonets put right across the back of the student. As you can imagine, the DILM is a very dynamic teaching method; it also involves an incredible amount of time preparing for the master class.

The students are not assigned a great deal of homework. Instead the master class, which contains between 22 and 30 students, is broken down into three or four groups for the purposes of intense drilling. In these smaller groups, they are taught by an undergraduate whose primary function

is to drill orally according to a specific technique with everything done in class.

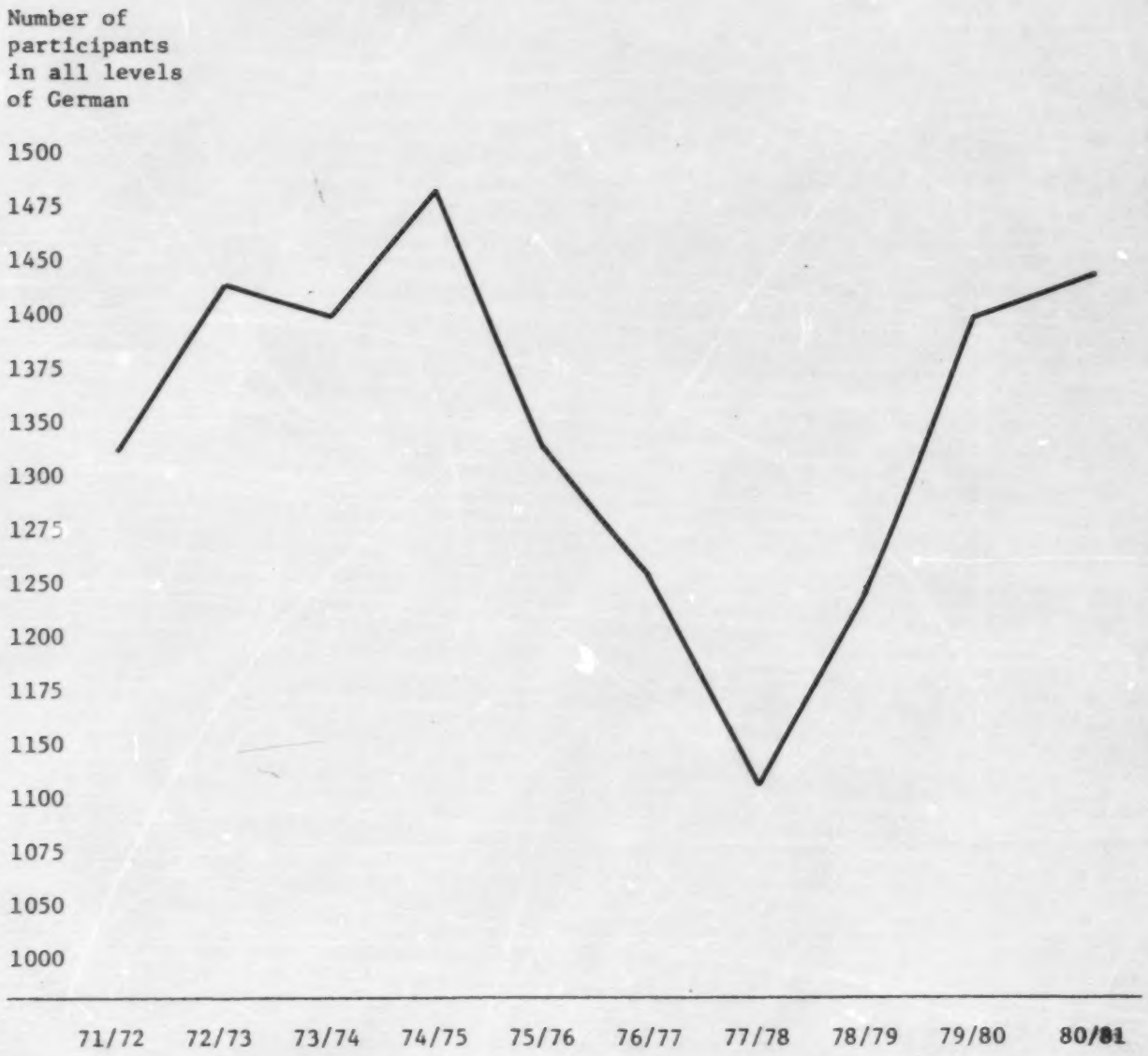
In brief, there are three components to the program: one hour in the master class in which surprises and antics are going on; one hour in the drill sessions carefully worked out by the master teacher and done by an apprentice teacher chosen and trained in specially designed workshops; and a thirty-minute session in the language laboratory every day. In total, the student has almost two-and-one-half hours daily contact with the target language. I invite those who are interested in what we do at the University of Florida, how we set this program up and all the dynamics involved to read my description in Foreign Language Annals for April 1980. For those of you who are interested specifically in German, the Spring 1982 issue of Die Unterrichtspraxis contains an article I wrote about the teaching dynamics and the administrative difficulties involved in implementing the DILM.

We decided to do this particular kind of teaching in an effort to build enrollments. CHART 1 shows our ten-year German enrollment at all levels at the University of Florida. In the early 1970's we were not doing too badly with our traditional methods; we had about 1,475 students at all levels. This is at a university of 32,000; in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences we have 5,800 who are required to take at least three quarters of a language. As you can see, we lost enrollment between 1975 and 1977-78. The first attrition, of course, was experienced by the faculty, and I mean attrition in the biblical sense: the lowest degree of repentance fostered by a fear of punishment. A drop like this involved over three FTE's, i.e. three faculty positions were on the line. This encouraged us to develop some kind of a new method that would interest students.

As the chart indicates, the intensive language model has been successful in a short time. Enrollments have leveled out, and we are almost up to

CHART 1

TEN YEAR GERMAN ENROLLMENT (ALL LEVELS) AT THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA



our former peaks. This is with the same number of faculty positions. We instituted the DILM in Russian two years ago, when there were only 88 students of Russian at all levels. At last count in the fall enrollments, there were 56 enrolled in Russian I alone and over 169 in the entire Russian program.

CHART 2 shows the average annual attrition rates for our traditional program: the one-book, one-teacher, learn-for-the-test kind of instruction. The drop out rate is measured here from the end of registration to final exams within one academic quarter. Compare the average annual attrition

CHART 2

ATTRITION IN THE TRADITIONAL GERMAN PROGRAM

	End of Registration			Received Final Grade			Average Annual Attrition Rate
	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring	
1975/76	241	139	110	212	121	104	10.1%
1976/77	200	154	89	171	141	82	9.77%
1977/78	196	133	101	163	109	89	15.3%
1978/79*	184	135	119	167	103	98	16.83%
1979/80*	148	90	108	126	83	98	10.58%
1980/81*	132	106	90	113	99	75	12.55%

Total Average Attrition Rate 1975-1981 12.52%

*Does not include ILM-statistics

for this method with the rates for the admittedly small number who are involved in our Dartmouth Intensive Language Model. As we can see, the attrition rates in some cases are practically zero. CHART 3 shows the figures.

CHART 3

ATTRITION IN THE INTENSIVE LANGUAGE MODEL

	Registered	Graded	Attrition Rate*
Summer 78	26	26	0%
Fall 78	41	41	0%
Winter 79	30	26	13.3%
Fall 79	61	61	0%
Winter 80	54	54	0%
Fall 80	46	45	2.0%
Winter 81	55	49	10.9%

*Beginning ILM ONE is not offered in Spring Quarter.

We still have an attrition factor in the Winter Quarter. Students who begin the DILM in the winter tend to fall out because of illness and a number of other reasons, many of which Professor Valette described. But we are particularly impressed with a group with virtually no dropout.

Preregistration for the intensive language model has been extremely small. The students do not know about the Dartmouth program, and we get an enrollment pattern as shown on CHART 4. However, the word gets around, and getting the word around is a big part of the intensive language model. The participants in the workshops hand out the literature all over campus. Last semester, we put up eighty-five posters across campus in a period of

CHART 4

ENROLLMENT IN GERMAN I WITH THE INTENSIVE LANGUAGE MODEL

	Fall	% Increase	Winter	% Increase over Pre-Reg.
1978/79	15	250%	26	0%
1979/80	58	151%	54	11%
1980/81	45	400%	49	53%

an hour and a half right before the workshop began. The increase in the fillment tallies justifies the effort.

As has already been pointed out by my colleagues, the biggest problem in attrition rate is not simply holding enrollment within one semester, although we find the intensive language model does that admirably. The major difficulty is to keep students over three quarters of the language requirement. CHART 5 illustrates the drop from 212 starting out in the Fall, down to about 139 who have gone on to the second quarter of the traditional program. By the third quarter enrollments are way down; the loss is almost 100 students. Our attrition rates over the quarters can be as high as a third to a half of the initial enrollment. Even if we add those who would complete the language requirement in the summer, the attrition rate remains extremely high.

The chart shows, on the other hand, that the attrition rate across the three quarters in the DILM is significantly less. In 1979-80 we did have a disturbing figure of 44%. We went through the records to find out what happened to these students, and almost all of them, down to 8.6%, merely stopped for a quarter and continued the next time that level was offered on the DILM. A random sampling of students dropping the traditionally taught

CHART 5

TRADITIONAL METHOD - ATTRITION RATES

	Fall (GER I)	Winter (GER II) (Reg)	Graded	Spring (GER III) (Reg)	Graded	Number of GER II Winter Students Completing GER III in Summer	Average Annual Attrition for three levels
1975/76	212	(150)	139	(130)	116	5	47.64%
1976/77	171	(171)	132	(111)	103	7	35.67%
1977/78*	163	(130)	100	(100)	76	9	47.85%
1978/79*	126	(91)	80	(84)	83	5	30.15%
1979/80*	126	(102)	96	(97)	70	8	38.10%
1980/81*	165	(142)	131	(97)	95	2	41.20%

*Does not include ILM enrollment.

ILM - ATTRITION RATES*

(Based on Students Receiving Grades)

	Fall (ILM-GER I)	Winter (II)	Spring III/Summer III		Attrition Rate
1978/79	15	19	16	not offered	(0%) 16%
1979/80	58	46	31	1	44.82% (8.6%)
1980/81	45	31	21	18	13.3%

*Does not include enrollments in the three quarter ILM-GER sequence which begins in Winter Quarter, continues in Spring and finishes in Summer or in the following Fall.

sequence indicated to us that they did not reenroll. In our traditional program, those who do not finish the three-quarter sequence are unlikely to do so. By contrast, it is probable that those who start on the DILM will reregister at a later date, usually after one quarter.

In the beginning, we scheduled a DILM-course at the same time as a traditional section. Any student who felt threatened, did not like the model, did not like being a guinea pig in an experiment was invited to go back to a traditional section. We offered special help in making the transfer. We had no takers. Never has anyone left the intensive language model to go into a traditional class during a quarter. Because of schedule problems, a student is sometimes forced into a traditional section in his second or third quarter. Those students do well in traditional courses and are usually "A" students.

CHART 6 shows what the intensive language model has meant to our intermediate and advanced level programs. We now have forty-six declared majors in German, after three-and-one-half years with the DILM. The intermediate program, as you can see by CHART 6, has mushroomed. Enrollment has tripled at the intermediate level in the last three-and-one-half years, and we have significantly more students in the upper division. In the early 1970's we enjoyed a healthy enrollment in upper division. But the

CHART 6

INTERMEDIATE AND UPPER DIVISION ENROLLMENT

	1975/76	76/77	77/78	78/79	79/80	80/81
GER 2000 level	51	54	48	56	104	155
GER 3000 and 4000 level	149	92	90	134	122	137

bottom just dropped out in 1976. By 1978, we started to build majors in the upper division program again.

What did we do with the $6,000 from Exxon? How do you go about spending the money? What do you need it for? CHART 7 shows a breakdown of the budget for the DILM.

CHART 7

BUDGET FOR IMPLEMENTING THE INTENSIVE LANGUAGE MODEL

I.	Preparation	
	A. 50% salary for a Master Teacher to develop the model in a Summer Session	$ 2,000
	B. Duplicating the material for drill sessions and tests	$ 250
II.	Training Workshop for 25 participants for three days	
	A. Food at $10 per day	$ 750+
	B. Lodging at $8 per day	$ 650+
III.	Salaries for four Apprentice Teachers in one quarter	
	A. Five days, twenty-five weeks = 120 work days	
	B. Minimum wage $3.35 per hour two hours per day = $6.70 ++	
	C. 120 x 6.70 x 4 = 3,216	$ 3,216
	TOTAL COST	$ 6,866

\+ Can be reduced by utilizing dorm space and student cafeteria.

++ Apprentice Teachers are paid both for the hour they prepare and for the hour they teach. This sum can be reduced by offering the Apprentice Teacher a combination of academic credit and cash.

If this is such a successful and effective model, why don't we teach all the courses this way? Why do we have any traditional programs at all?

The stumbling block, from my point of view, is the expense. Three beginning sections of German I, feeding into two German II intensive sections, resulting in only one German III intensive section drives up costs markedly. The biggest item on the budget is the hourly wage of the undergraduate assistants who are paid both for the hour they teach and for the hour to prepare. We have tried giving them credit, but eventually the assistants want to be paid. Just three sections of German I narrowing to two sections of German II and only one section of German III adds up to above $25,000 extra dollars which the department has to fund. Otherwise the DILM begins to falter. CHART 8 shows a full budget.

CHART 8

SEMESTER BUDGET FOR THREE LEVELS OF THE INTENSIVE LANGUAGE MODEL

I.	German I	
	A. Three Master Teachers (Salary paid by the University)	
	B. Twelve Undergraduate Apprentice Teachers	$ 9,648
II.	German II	
	A. Two Master Teachers (Salary paid by the University)	
	B. Eight Apprentice Teachers	$ 6,432
III.	German III	
	A. One Master Teacher (Salary paid by the University)	
	B. Four Apprentice Teachers	$ 3,216
IV.	Three Workshops for the Three Levels (25 participants each)	$ 4,200
V.	Duplication of Materials and Tests	$ 1,500
	TOTAL	$24,996

The University of Florida is among the first major, publicly-funded universities to try the DILM. Small liberal arts colleges have been successful with it, but we were among the first to do the whole thing on publicly lically supported funds. Because we got so much publicity for the model, especially when one of the surprises included teaching German with a nine-foot boa constrictor, the dean of the college did in fact give us every dime that we needed for the program when Exxon-funding ran out. We also write letters to the parents of those undergraduates chosen as apprentice teachers, telling them how happy we are to welcome their son or daughter to the faculty. This gets the parents interested in what their children are doing in German. The point, of course, is that the parents exert pressure on the dean's office to keep our program funded. Hopefully our deans will soon learn that foreign language learning is expensive. Just as one cannot deny laboratory equipment to a chemistry major, one should not deprive a beginning language student of an assistant teacher (or tutor) who can help him or her toward oral proficiency. In this respect the DILM has been very successful.

COMMENT: What do you teach with the boa constrictor?

JOHNSTON: The boa constrictor helps us to teach the students things like height, length, elements of the current vocabulary. Here's the scenario: I am explaining length, width, and depth in German. A knock comes at the door. Two students enter. Both are German majors at the advanced level. They have a basket in their hands, and they ask me in German, "Have you seen Giselle? We're here to see Giselle? Where is she?" And I say, "No, there's nobody by that name here. Is anybody here named Giselle? No. No Giselle here." "But she was supposed to meet us here," they say in German. And all the kids wonder what the heck is going on. And we say, "Well, we don't know. Maybe if you described Giselle we could help you? How big is

she?" And the kid comes back with, "Nine feet." "Nine feet big?" "Well, actually nine feet long." "Nine feet long? Where does she live? Oh, in a tree?" "In a tree. . . ." Now the students are very involved with Giselle and thinking, "Am I understanding that right? Could that really be what it means?" Then after this goes on for three or four minutes the student finally says, "Oh, here is Giselle! She's in this basket." We ask one of the students to open up the basket and out comes a nine-foot boa constrictor. Of course it just blows them away when they see this. They never forget it, nor how to ask a German, "How tall are you? How big are you? Where do you live?" Those things. That is an incredibly intensive way, a dynamic way, of teaching, and it involves a great deal of preparation.

JOHNSON: Let us now talk about some of the issues brought up in our presentation. I realize some discussion has been curtailed.

COMMENT: I have a question for Dr. Johnston. Somebody who is involved as master teacher in the Dartmouth program, what kind of a teaching load does that person have?

JOHNSTON: Usually two courses, the Model course and another. By long-term agreement, everyone in our department teaches one beginning course and one advanced level course. The regular faculty are involved at least every other semester in the intensive language model. We have teachers who really do not want to get away from the Model. Once they have done it this way, they do not want to teach any other way. This year we were forced for the first time to ask some of the regular faculty if we could not assign them a DILM couse because we wanted to see if this could also be done with graduate students (TA's). We have found it was successful, by the way. It just takes an awful lot of patience on the part of the director of the program to train the graduate students to be virtual magicians

who can conjure up an explanation for something or a trick to keep the class attentive to what is being taught.

COMMENT: These courses are for how many credits?

JOHNSTON: The courses have been for five credits each. Our language requirement is fifteen credit hours. Now we are going over to a semester system, and that is going to make a change.

COMMENT: You might want to mention the film.

JOHNSTON: Yes, it is available now in several different places, audio-visual centers and commercial houses. It is a film of the Model, at work at Darmouth. I do not particularly appreciate that film. It does not do justice to the program. When I first saw it, I thought the method was absurd. But, in my opinion, John Rassias has analyzed and correctly judged the mentality of our college undergraduates. He knows exactly how to appeal to them. And the method really works. I have been one of his biggest converts because I was so skeptical at the beginning. A visitor, Walter Picard, a member of German Parliament, came to talk to a group of our intermediate students. After his presentation, he took questions from the audience. He was totally surprised. He had never met a group of American students in the U.S.A. who could communicate in German.

COMMENT: Is there a particular profile of a teacher who would be able to go into this particular method? I mean, this sounds like, for example, I don't think I . . .

JOHNSTON: Well, I don't believe that. I believe everybody could learn to teach with the Model. I have found resistance among certain faculty members. They have done their old thing for years, and they do not want to be bothered. But if you are really interested in an experience for the student that he or she will never forget, this is the way to go. And if you are interested, you can carry on the Dartmouth Intensive Model.

COMMENT: I have a question for anybody. I teach at what I think is probably a typical state college. We have about six people in our department and not a very large number of students. We teach various languages. There is no foreign language requirement for graduation at our college. Our average teaching load is around 15 semester hours. We teach at least three, sometimes upwards to five courses. There is very little time for anything. We think we have a very good foreign language program, obviously, but our attrition rate from first semester to second semester in beginning language is between sixty and seventy percent. Do you know of any studies about how to lower that attrition rate given the conditions under which we work? Everyone who has talked seems to have resources to work with or at least time. We have nothing to work with.

IRVIN: What do you know about your student population? Have you given them attitude questionnaires, surveys, that kind of thing, to find out what they are after in foreign language study, or what they seem to feel they are missing?

COMMENT: Not recently. We have done that, but not recently.

IRVIN: That is the place where I would start.

COMMENT: We have asked, we have tracked down dropouts to find out why they dropped out. Generally it is a non-academic reason. We have relatively low-income students. Many of our students drop out of school as well as our classes.

VALETTE: How large are your classes?

COMMENT: Well, we have small classes. Our beginning Spanish classes will have roughly 30 sometimes, but it is more typically 20. We have well prepared instructors, who are very concerned about the students. We have a very personal, good relationship with our students.

JOHNSTON: If I could interject a word here, I would like to point out

that we had nothing when we started the DILM. As a matter of fact, we were really on the block. That is why we had to do something. The financing has been a problem, but because of the enthusiasm of the students, because of the enthusiasm of these apprentice teachers, because of the enthusiasm of the parents, we have been able to sustain some funding. It is a problem, and it was a big one for us, the same kind of problem you're talking about. And this is how we solved it.

JOHNSON: I see we have come upon the time when we must end. Perhaps you will be able to continue your conversation privately. Thank you.